Manchester Public Schools

Pride in Excellence

What's Today's News?

MHS sophomore bass player Christian Mills earns an extraordinary honor…

MHS sophomore bass player Christian Mills earned an extraordinary honor on Saturday January 31 at the *Berklee High School Jazz Festival in Boston*. He was recognized for Outstanding Musicianship in the highly competitive Jazz Combo large school division (S1). The Berklee festival has more than 200 ensembles and over 3,000 student musicians participating, making it the country's largest high school jazz festival.

Mr. Douglas Maher, director of the MHS Jazz Combo said that he "believed that the judges understood the high level of skill that Chris displayed on a very challenging jazz composition called 'Tricotism' ". No Manchester High School student has ever received this level of recognition at the prestigious Berklee festival.

What makes Chris' accomplishment even more impressive is the fact that he only began playing the acoustic bass last year (Previously, he had played the electric bass.). Christian is a tuba player in the MHS Band program, a recent addition to the MHS Orchestra on string bass, and the bass player in the MHS Jazz Ensemble. He has also been working with Sean Rubin, a bass instructor in the school's "Endangered Instrument" program.

MHS Band director Keith Berry mentioned other recent accomplishments for Chris including earning a position in the 2015 CMEA Eastern Region Jazz Ensemble and becoming eligible to audition for the 2015 CT All-State Jazz Ensemble. Berry said "other colleges have begun to notice Christian's skills as he was selected for a summer scholarship at last year's UMASS Jazz Festival".

The general public has two opportunities to hear Chris and his MHS peers in concert. The first opportunity will be on Wednesday February 4 at the MHS Mid-Winter Concert at 7:30 p.m. in Bailey Auditorium. The next opportunity will be at the 9th annual MHS Jazz Festival from 4:00-9:00 on February 11 (snow date February 12). Both events are free and open to the public.